

WASHINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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(207) 255-0983 * (888) 287-3006 * FAX: (207) 255-4987

Helping Washington County
Communities Plan for Tomorrow

Judy East
Executive Director

August 12, 2009
Commissioner David Cole
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Subject: Letter of Support
Eastport Gateway Project, ARRA Tiger Grant

Dear Commissioner Cole:

The Washington County Council of Governments supports the ARRA Tiger Grant Application for the Eastport Gateway Project to make Freight Rail Transportation and Port Infrastructure Investments that will connect the Port of Eastport to the nation's rail infrastructure.

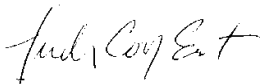
The Eastport Gateway Project aligns with regional transportation goals and priorities to improve freight connections to the Port of Eastport as expressed in the Strategic Investment Plan for Corridors of Regional and Economic Significance (SIPCREs) for MaineDOT Region 4 Transportation Corridors (2007). The Eastport Gateway Project also furthers recommendations made in the Downeast Coastal Corridor Multi-Modal Management Plan (submitted in to MDOT in draft form in June 2009).

In addition, this project will help meet local transportation goals and economic development goals as established by the City of Eastport Comprehensive Plan Update (2003) and City of Calais Comprehensive Plan Update (2005). As part of an on-going comprehensive plan update process, the Towns of Perry and Pembroke have also noted to need for improved freight connections to the Port of Eastport in order to achieve their own local transportation and economic development goals. Perry and Pembroke are both proposing adoption of land use districts specifically to support trans-loading facilities from road to rail as part of their future land use plans.

To help further this project, Washington County Council of Governments will provide input and suggestions on the proposed redevelopment; talk to our members about community issues that may arise as a result of the redevelopment; host public meetings; help post community outreach materials on our web site; and provide input on the redevelopment and reuse of the corridor. Our assistance extends to this biennial contract as we work with towns in all of eastern Washington County on improving connections by rail and road to both I-95 and the national rail network.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (207) 454-0465.

Sincerely:



Judy East
Executive Director
Washington County Council of Government